

folks who try to come here illegally. We are dedicating significant resources to detaining and deporting those who try to go around the rules—spending roughly \$2 billion a year on this effort. In fact, since President Obama took office, removals have increased from 291,000 people in 2007, or just under 300,000 folks, to more than 400,000 last year, when we returned a record number of people to their home countries.

Our Nation must also work with our neighbors to improve the process and decrease the time it takes to return our detainees to those countries of origin. When we were in Texas recently, I learned we have an agreement with Guatemala where they issue electronic travel documents to their citizens almost as soon as we apprehend them along our border—mostly Texas. This process cuts down on detention times for Guatemalans from 30 days to roughly 7 days.

It has a real positive effect on the Guatemalans we arrest and take into custody because they spend less time in detention—not a pleasant experience. It saves us millions of dollars because we have to hold them, feed them, and give them a place to stay for a shorter period of time. We need to take the Guatemalan model where we dramatically reduce the detention time and see if we cannot replicate their program with our other nations, especially particularly nations such as Mexico.

Finally, I will conclude by admitting this legislation is not perfect. On the other hand, I have not seen a perfect piece of legislation. Even the Constitution we adopted in Delaware on December 7, 1787, to become the first State wasn't perfect either. We amended it again and again. We amended it over 30 times.

While I do believe there is certainly room for constructive criticism and debate about this bill, I am certain this legislation represents an improvement over our current system. I believe we

can make it even stronger in the coming weeks, and I hope we will.

I plan to offer some amendments, and my guess is the Presiding Officer will offer amendments as well as our colleagues. We ought to offer them, debate them, and vote them up or down.

We must come to this debate with an understanding that the status quo is unacceptable. If we don't modernize our immigration system to allow employers to fill the jobs our economy needs and our citizens are unwilling or unable to do, we are hurting our children's future while at the same time making our Nation less secure.

As a Nation founded on the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, we simply cannot tolerate a shadow economy of 11 million people who are scared to live freely, who generate black markets to produce false identity documents, and who drive down the wages of U.S. citizens.

To my colleagues who are still uneasy with legalization, I ask this: What is the alternative? It is not practical to find and deport 11 million people. Most of the undocumented immigrants in this country have lived here more than 10 years. Many have children who are U.S. citizens. They have deep roots in our society and contribute meaningfully to our national interests.

I think the American people would want us to be tough, but they also want us to be humane and realistic. I believe this legislation offers that path, that balance, and now is the time to take that path.

In closing, I am reminded of something that binds all of us together. If we actually look above where you are sitting, there are some words in Latin. If we look up there, we will see the Latin phrase "e pluribus unum," which means "out of many, one." It is a phrase that adorns our Nation's seal. It suggests that while we all come from many different places, in the end we are one Nation.

With that thought in mind, I will simply say to our colleagues and to

those who are following this discussion tonight, we have a choice. We can work together to make this bill better and adopt it in a bipartisan manner or we can remain in gridlock and let the American people down.

I know what I want to do. I know what the people of Delaware want us to do. They want us to legislate, and I want us to legislate as well. I want us to make our immigration system better. I want to show the American people that Congress can come together—Democrats, Republicans, and a couple of Independents—on an issue of great importance to our country's economy and great importance to our national security. We need to get this done, and I am encouraged with the grace of God we will.

Mr. President, you will be glad to know that I am done, but our work remains to be done. I look forward to working with the Presiding Officer and 98 of our colleagues to get the job done for the American people.

With that, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2013.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:02 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 13, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL S. LINNINGTON